

## **COURTNEY HUGUENIN**

**State Delegate Candidate: New York**

*Statement 2*

**NASP Leaders have adopted five strategic goals that guide the association's work. In your state, what are some gains being made in school psychology practice related to these goals, and what are some pressing challenges?**

In New York, school psychologists are encouraged to examine their practices through a social justice lens, to ensure that all children's rights are valued and protected. Activities initiated by the New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP) inspired me to embark on my personal social justice journey. I currently participate in a book club facilitated by the NYASP Culturally Responsive Practices committee and served as an editor when NYASP collaborated with NASP committees to develop a position statement focused on supporting indigenous youth. Being able to examine my own practices in a supportive environment should be an opportunity for all school psychologists. While an organization or school district may view their practices through a social justice lens, individuals need to go through their own processes and no two starting points are the same. Change is a process that is grounded in reflection and understanding.

To address workforce shortages, school psychologists participate in the NASP Exposure Project to recruit diverse high school and undergraduate students, helping to ensure that a diverse workforce is established to meet the needs of children and families. NYASP maintains an updated list of open school psychology positions across the state. The NYASP Student Representatives and Student Liaison stay connected with graduate students, in hopes of retaining highly skilled school psychologists in the state. New York has more training programs than any other state, however, programs in rural areas are lacking. Students who are not trained in rural areas may be less likely to relocate to those areas, which can lead to shortages.

I became interested in advocacy through my personal experiences, but my mentors assisted me in cultivating and refining my leadership skills. NYASP amplifies the work of school psychologists and recruits passionate and skilled individuals to join the board. New board members participate in an orientation to learn about operations and their specific roles. NYASP also has a mentorship program that allows Early Career members to seek advice from a seasoned professional. While school psychologists may have the drive, a challenge to leadership development is having the time to further develop those skills. It is imperative that mentors are equally accessible to anyone with a passion for leadership development.

The NASP Practice Model is used as a resource when advocating for school psychologists employing their expertise in a comprehensive model. In addition to partnering with other state associations focused on mental and behavioral health, NYASP regularly engages the membership with legislative advocacy and provides resources for speaking with stakeholders at the local and state level. While the NASP Practice Model depicts the school psychologists' comprehensive training, challenges arise when implementing the model requires changes to the district's organizational structure and re-assigning responsibilities. Despite foundational training, practitioners who have

spent much of their careers in an assessment role may require access to professional development to hone their skills in mental and behavioral health services.

I am committed to supporting continued progress related to the NASP strategic goals to help children in New York thrive.